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# The MUSICAL AMATEUR

## LESSONS IN HARMONY.

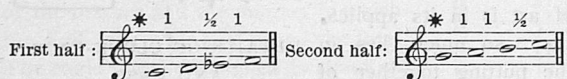
### VI.



THE last lesson related to the formation of the major scale. We must now acquire a knowledge of the minor scale. There are two recognized forms of the minor scale, the Harmonic and the Melodic. There has been a great deal of discussion in reference to these two forms;

not only as to which was preferable as a model, but as to how each should be named. Some call the scale which I shall give first the Melodic, and some the Harmonic minor scale. I prefer to call it by the former name, because, in writing a minor melody, it will, in nine cases out of ten, follow naturally the changes which occur in this scale ascending and descending.

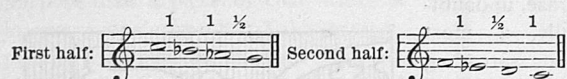
The Melodic minor scale, then, for such we will call it, is formed thus :



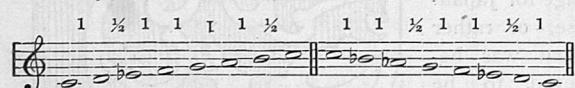
It will be seen that the ascending minor scale differs from the ascending major scale only in its third. The third is, in fact, the deciding interval. No matter in how many vagaries a composer may indulge, one rule remains unchanged : If the third of a chord or scale is major, the whole chord or scale is so ; if the third is minor, the whole chord or scale is so.

The pupil will find it best to write out, first, the ascending form of all the minor scales. So great a change takes place in the descending form that an attempt to grapple with both at once may result in hopeless confusion.

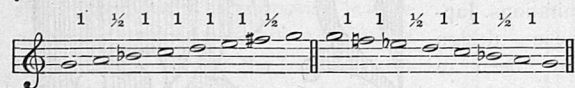
The descending scale shows much less similarity to the major scale. Here it is :



The appearance of the scale as a whole is this :

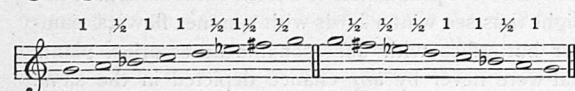


Write all the minor scales, both ascending and descending. There is, of course, a minor scale for every major scale. It will be better to take them in the same order as you did the major scales. The one I have here given you is the scale of C minor. Taking them in the order I suggest, the next will be G minor, which appears thus :



I have written this out to show you that you have no need to be astonished even though sharps, flats, and naturals should all appear in the same scale ; and I say here again, as I have more than once said before, "Do not be shy of double sharps or double flats, but make yourself thoroughly familiar with, and easy in, them."

When you have written this minor scale in all keys, you may turn your attention to the other, the Harmonic minor scale. This has the same form ascending and descending, but presents the somewhat startling peculiarity of an interval of a tone and a half between its sixth and seventh notes. I will not divide this into halves ; the first half ascending (which is, naturally, the last half descending) is precisely like that of the Melodic minor scale, that necessary feature, the minor third, figuring in each.



No matter how queer this scale may look in some of

the "extreme" keys (that is, keys which use many sharps or flats), you may always be positive that you are right if your intervals are correct. If your tones and semitones and tones-and-a-half all come in their right order, your scale *must* be right.

Write this also in all keys.

There is but one scale more to consider, and that can be briefly dismissed. It is the Chromatic scale. In formation this scale is simplicity itself. It knows nothing of keys ; for it contains all and belongs to none. The Chromatic scale is merely a succession of semitones, ascending and descending, commencing where you please and stopping on the octave of the starting point.

If I wished, in the German style, to be very learned and to confuse the pupil as much as possible, I should here branch off into a long disquisition upon the ancient Greek and Ecclesiastical scales, and the modern Turkish scale ; but as I do not believe in introducing unnecessary fog into a sufficiently difficult study, I forbear.

In our next lesson we will commence the study of Harmony, properly so-called ; to which all this has been only preparatory.

C. F.

## BOITO'S "MEFISTOFELES."

(CONCLUDED.)

BERLIOZ, in his work on "Orchestration," has made wild war upon the custom of writing fugues for the organ, and upon the custom of introducing them freely in sacred composition. He declares them to be utterly unfitted for such purposes. He says "these imitations in canon, these scraps of twisted and tangled phrases, pursuing, flying, rolling over one another, this 'confusion worse confounded,' where true melody is excluded, where the chords succeed each other so rapidly that their character can scarcely be discerned, this incessant subversion of all system, this appearance of disorder, these abrupt interruptions of one part by another, all these hideous musical pasquinades," are "excellent for depicting an orgy of savages, or a dance of demons." On this hint, Boito has written. His concluding chorus in the second act is a fugue. The subject is wild enough ; the working out makes it yet wilder ; and when the curtain falls the music has reached a pitch of frenzied savagery which I should think would leave the chorus prostrated, the orchestra exhausted, and the audience worked up to a state of excitement almost too great to be borne.

The third act occurs in the prison, in the cell of poor, demented, condemned Marguerite—condemned for the murder of her babe and of her mother. To do the music of this act anything like justice I ought to give a paragraph to every page of the score, but I have not the time to write, nor my readers the time to read, what, in common fairness, this act deserves. The motto of it comes from Mefistofeles' exclamation when Marguerite dies :—"God hath judged her !" At its opening, Marguerite is discovered, raving and singing. In her first song she complains that her jailors have killed her child and that they have charged her with the murder, in order to drive her mad. Then her wandering wits turn to her surroundings ; she is cold, her cell is gloomy ; then her grief comes over her, her heart is weeping ; it would fain fly away like the swallow, whose flight occurs to her as she mentions it and which she imitates in a wonderfully written cadenza. And just here comes one of those apparently simple effects, which only genius discovers, and which turn the hearer cold with delight at their beauty and their truth. The cadenza has ended on F sharp, the accompanying chord being D major. But, as the cadenza ends, the imagined bird has vanished from her view, her hopeless misery rushes in again upon her mind, and she falls on her knees with the words "Ah, have pity, heaven !" these words being sung on the descending tones of the chord of D minor, starting on the F natural. It does not seem much, to write of it, or to read of it ; but

hear it, dear reader, hear it, and it will draw your tears if you have any to draw.

I must pass over the entrance of Faust and the succeeding scene between him and Marguerite, although both libretto and music are full of dramatic surprises and great effects, until I come to the exquisite and dreamy duet, "Far distant, far distant," sung when Faust has calmed her for a while and fancy has raised before her wandering mind the vision of a peaceful and happy isle, where they may live in quiet bliss. This duet is a marvel. It should be almost whispered, save in two places where a great wave of passion swells and breaks ; and it dies away finally in an entranced dream of contentment. This calm is rudely broken by Mefistofeles, who comes in to tell them that day is breaking and that they must escape now, or not at all. The sight of him re-arouses all Marguerite's wildest frenzy. Exhausted, she finally sinks into Faust's arms, half dead ; and then she sings her last solo, "Slowly the pallid dawn appears," one of the most dramatic numbers in the opera. With her final cry to heaven for forgiveness she sinks, dying, from Faust's arms ; and, turning shudderingly from him with her last remnant of strength, dies as the day brightly lights the cell and the guards and headsman appear at the door.

With the next act we breathe a new air and experience new sensations. Faust has never yet said the fatal word which shall put him in Mefistofeles' power ; and, half despairing, the fiend determines to give him a taste of a kind of life he never can have approached. We are in Greece, voluptuous, poetic Greece ; and Faust is here to meet Helen of Troy. The curtain rises on a lovely Grecian landscape, such a landscape as poets dream of and painters strive to depict. Helen, surrounded by her nymphs, by sirens, and by all the most beautiful embodied fables of poetic mythology, is seen, and sings a seductive serenade. It is worthy of remark that, in all this act, nothing remains of the German flavor of those preceding, nor of the celestial majesty of the prologue. It is beauty, and exquisite beauty, but of an entirely different kind. All is sensuous and beautiful, but classic. Mefistofeles, who brings Faust on, after the exit of Helen and her attendants, sends him off again to explore this new land, and then, in a powerful recitative, bitterly regrets the loss, temporary though it be, of the acrid vapors and rugged scenes of the North, so much better suited to his nature and taste. The advent of a group of dancing girls drives him away in turn. They dance to a most characteristic number ; and, at the end of this, Helen and her attendants re-enter. It is Helen, but not the Helen of the opening of the act. She was then the seductive Helen who lured Paris on to his destruction and the ruin of Troy ; she is now an anguished woman, before whose eyes arise the visions of the misery she had caused, and who, torn by remorse, gives way to the bitterest lamentings. In an intensely dramatic number she rehearses again the scenes of Troy's destruction, as her grief-racked mind again presents them to her ; and finishes her recital in a state of motionless sorrow. Faust re-enters, and, ravished by her beauty, addresses her in most burning poetry. Here occurs an instance of the minute study which Boito has given to his subject. Up to this moment the libretto of this act has been poetic and beautiful, but there has been no rhyme. The first rhymed finals heard are those of Faust's address to Helen. The Greeks had not rhyme, so says Boito. This novel beauty, added to poetry, attracts and subdues the Greek enchantress, and her first direct address to Faust contains the words which form the motto of this act : "Tell me, how shall I learn to speak the soft language thou breathest ?" Faust instructs her, and in the succeeding duet, a rhapsody on love, she puts her newly-acquired power to the most wonderful use. This duet, "O Love, deep, mysterious," is one of the broadest and most passionate numbers in the whole score. The melody has all the fire, breadth, and intensity of the best and greatest Italian school, and all the massive finish of the most modern German. Aided by the chorus, it works up to a most exciting cli-

\* These figures refer to the whole and half tone intervals.



max. The act finishes with the passionate murmurs of Faust and Helen as they wander together into the perfumed shades of the bushes surrounding them.

And then comes the epilogue—the last great result of all that Faust has experienced, of all Mefistofeles' endeavors. We are again in Faust's study. Faust is old and weak; his end is nearing. He has tried all earthly pleasures "the Real, and the Ideal; but the Ideal was a vision, and the Real was sorrow." Mefistofeles feels that his time for victory is now or never, and discontentedly attempts to re-arouse Faust with the remembered delights of past days. But a brighter and purer vision is absorbing Faust's soul. He has again opened his long-neglected Bible; and, as he studies it, there comes to him a sublime, unselfish desire to benefit not himself but all suffering humanity. The more this vision enwraps him, the harder does Mefistofeles try to attract him from it. He brings again before him the sirens in all their seductive beauty. But Faust has commenced to pray; and at the same moment there appears to him the vision of heavenly joys and beauty. Seizing his Bible as a shield against the now hated tempter, he says for the first time the decisive words (used as the motto for this epilogue), "O swift-fleeting atom! stay yet awhile, thou'rt lovely," and dies, praying earnestly for the pardon and salvation which he receives. Mefistofeles, writhing in agony under the celestial light, sinks into the earth; and the curtain falls as the Cherubim, raining roses upon the dead body of the repentant Faust, repeat their chorus of the first act.

As I read over my weak attempt at a description of this great work, I realize how utterly inadequate are any words to give the faintest idea of its magnitude and its manifold beauties. But I let the article stand, because I hope it may at least arouse in the minds of my readers a desire to see and willingness to study this, one of the most unapproachable of modern works.

C. F.

#### MUSICAL NOTES.

THE same operatic company that travelled last winter playing "Fatinitza" in English, is now playing "Boccaccio," another of Suppé's light operas. Several changes have been made in the company, not always for the better; but Miss Jeannie Winston is still the bright particular star of the organization. It would hardly be going too far to call this lady an English Aimée. She has an excellent vocal method, a fine and graceful stage presence, and her acting is full of that finesse which is usually supposed to belong exclusively to the French. The plot of the opera, although not remarkably coherent, gives rise to plenty of fun; and the music is, in some respects, better than that of "Fatinitza."

\* \* \*

A FEW nights ago I was at the Metropolitan Concert Hall, where Thomas holds forth with his orchestra. It is not, in finish and unity, the old Thomas orchestra of Central Park Garden days, when the whole number played as one man, with Thomas for the will-power; but how much better it is than any other orchestra we have! What delicacy in shading! what steadiness in slow movements! what firmness and certainty in attack!

\* \* \*

STEINWAY HALL was opened this season with a sort of inaugural concert, at which appeared Mr. Franz Rummel, pianist; Miss Schelle, mezzo-soprano; Mr. Adolph Fischer, violoncellist, and a large orchestra under the leadership of Mr. Dietrich, Theodore Thomas's assistant conductor. Mr. Dulcken was the (much too prominent) accompanist of the occasion.

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MISS MARIE SCHELLE is a new candidate for public and critical approval. She received the former in plentiful amount, as she has a pleasant appearance, was well dressed, has a good natural voice, and articulates distinctly. Her vocal method is, however, bad, her tones being very "throaty;" and she entirely lacks that repose which is one of the last results of conscientious study. Mendelssohn's Concert Aria, which she sang with orchestra, was therefore a rather harassing performance for a sympathetic listener; she seemed never to feel quite safe. She sang Robert Franz's "Er ist gekommen," though, particularly well; and will, if she is wise, confine herself to songs and ballads until she has had more of both study and experience.

MR. FISCHER is a violoncellist who came here with rather a flourish of trumpets; but he must be chronicled as a disappointment. His execution is facile, his intonation usually correct, and his bow arm very good; but his tone is small and nasal, and he uses the tremolo continually. It is no exaggeration, but simple fact, when I say that I have never yet heard him sustain a steady tone; his left hand is continually shaking as though it had the palsy. There is something too much of this in most violoncellists (I think Aubert was most free from it), but I never before saw it carried as far as it is by Mr. Fischer.

CARYL FLORIO.

## New Publications.

AMONG THE MANY ADMIRABLE English art works of the year, none will be found more suitable for holiday gifts than the three volumes imported by Messrs. Scribner & Welford, and announced by them elsewhere. We defer extended notice of these books until our next issue; then we hope to publish, with our comments, some specimen illustrations.

ART WORKERS AND CONNOISSEURS will find valuable hints in the "Revue des Arts Decoratifs," the latest and the least expensive of the first-class French serial publications devoted to the decorative arts. It is from the press of Quantin, so we need hardly say that it is beautifully printed and illustrated. It is intended to give publicity to the ideas and principles of the "Union Centrale des Arts Appliqués à l'Industrie," and the "Musée des Arts Decoratifs," so these ideas and principles are practical, and carry with them the weight of respected authority. We have received from J. W. Bouton, the American agent, the first three numbers of the publication. With each is given, besides other illustrations, a photogravure, respectively of rare Chinese porcelains and Oriental glassware in the Gasnault collection of the Limoges Museum, concerning which collection some valuable information is given in a well-written article—and a reproduction of a drawing of a ceiling by Pierre Victor Galaud, the decorative painter and architect, now busy on a commission from Herter for Mr. William H. Vanderbilt's Fifth avenue palace.

THE FIRST PART OF "MONUMENTS DE L'ART ANTIQUE," by Olivier Rayet, a sumptuously printed folio, superbly illustrated with heliogravures in monochrome, is J. W. Bouton's latest importation to delight the eyes of art students and lovers of "livres de luxe." It is from the press of Quantin, and is to be completed in five parts sold separately. In the limited space at our command this month we find it impossible to do justice to the work. For the present, therefore, let it suffice to say that it is invaluable to students of archaeological art and a noble addition to any art library.

"THE BOY TRAVELLERS IN SIAM AND JAVA," by Colonel Thomas W. Knox, published by Harper & Brothers, is a welcome sequel to the "Boy Travellers in China and Japan" by the same author, noticed in our columns about this season last year. Frank and Fred, continuing their journey under the guidance of Dr. Bronson, visit Siam, Java, Cochinchina, Cambodia, and the Malay Archipelago, and what they see and do in those interesting lands is agreeably told in the author's familiar style, characterized by a vein of humor peculiarly his own. The narrative is occasionally discursive, but when this occurs it is only to introduce some profusely illustrated story well calculated to entertain the reader. Woodcuts are interspersed with the letter-press in almost prodigious profusion. Many of them are familiar through their previous appearance in publications by Messrs. Harper & Brothers, and are introduced with barely a shadow of excuse. But as they are always interesting, and the more pictures such a book as this contains, the better the boys like it, no one has good cause to complain. Our young friends everywhere who have read the "Boy Travelers in China and Japan" will be thankful to Colonel Knox and his publishers for the present volume. Those who have not are advised now to read both. The printing and paper of the new volume are excellent, and the binding is strong and attractive in appearance.

BISQUE CHINA, which, after a brief popularity in this country, became almost unsalable, by one of those freaks of fashionable fancy which no one can explain has again become the rage. At the show rooms of Magnin, Guédin & Co. there is a large and varied array of these pretty trifles, which take among other forms those of shepherds and shepherdesses, Louis XVI. cavaliers and ladies, Cupids and Psyches, and "incroyables" and "merveilleuses" of the Revolution. A grade above them from an art standpoint, and, we are happy to say, rivalling them in popularity, are some charming French terra-cotta statues and groups, including a beautifully modelled "Paul and Virginia," and some precocious little babies after the style of the Italian marbles in the Centennial Exhibition which, we remember, sent young lady visitors into ecstasies of admiration. "Le Premier Bijou," shows a naked little boy presenting a jewel to a naked little girl, who is evidently pleased with it, although, as she has no dress of any kind to put it on, we can but wonder what she will do with it. The same house exhibits some admirable bronzes by Picault of Egyptian priests offering images for sale. The bodies in some cases are colored dark red, and in others almost black, and the bronze is gilded in parts with excellent effect. Colored marble, introduced in the composition, is rather an innovation, but by no means an unpleasing one.

## Correspondence.

### BINDING THE ART AMATEUR.

Editor of The Art Amateur:

SIR: Your admirable monthly seems to be steadily increasing in interest and value. We prize it highly, and I desire to ask whether you do not provide in some way for binding it, at least so far as to furnish index and title-page. I have the three volumes complete, and desire to put them, in bound form, on the same library shelf with The Aldine and other art publications. Your admiring reader,

GILBERT M. TUCKER, Albany, N. Y.

ANSWER.—The title-page and index for Vols. I. and II. appeared at the end of the first year, in the number for May, 1880, and in May, 1881, the title-page and index for Vols. III. and IV. will be published.

### SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT ETCHING.

Editor of The Art Amateur:

SIR: I desire, with your kind permission, to ask several questions relating to "etching." (1) Is there any one dealer in New York city supplying every needed material for etching? (2) Is there any "positive" process of etching known that can be worked as satisfactorily as the "negative," and after the same manner? I do not mean like the positive process Mr. Hamerton recommends, of etching the plate under acid. (3) Can the "Dutch mordant" be used over and over again, or does it become unfitted for use after one biting? (4) Wouldn't an ordinary printer's inking roller, made of glue, answer instead of the leather covered roll (recommended by Hamerton) for "grounding" plates? (5) What is the advantage of smoking a plate, and is it necessary where the ground is already black? (6) As a "positive" process, would the following answer: To silver the plate with bleu d'argent, then to black it by dipping into the "bath;" or even to black it by simply dipping the bare copper plate into "Dutch mordant;" then to "ground" it with a transparent ground and whiten the surface with whitening powder? Wouldn't this give black lines on a white ground?

ETCHER, Hallowell, Me.

ANSWER.—(1) Yes; Geo. Finkenaur's Sons & Co., 513 Sixth Avenue. (2) No. (3) It rather improves by being used over. (4) No; it would be too soft. (5) To darken the varnish so as to see the marks of the needle. The ground can not be already black and at the same time fit to work on. (6) No process of the kind is possible. The plate could not be etched after such a bath, which would not blacken but only corrode it. You do not consider that whatever ground you might have would, after you had scratched it with the needle, show the copper bottom.

Zach. Fuller, of Gothic, Col., will find the information he asks for in our answer to "Etcher's" first question.

### GREEN IN RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM.

Editor of The Art Amateur:

SIR: The writer on "Religious Symbolism in Art" in your October issue, I see, disapproves of the use of green in illumination. I find it such a useful color that I am anxious to know whether there are no circumstances under which its employment is justifiable—in lettering, for instance.

ILLUMINATOR, Halifax, N. S.

ANSWER.—For lettering, least of all, should green be used. Never indeed, unless about such words as "Hope." Then it should be enclosed in a gold bordering and thrown up with chocolate lines, as unless this is done the word is hard to distinguish at a distance. Green is more useful in foliage borderings than in anything else in illumination.

### EXTRA LARGE PLAQUES.

Editor of The Art Amateur:

SIR: In a recent number a correspondent asks for large flat round plaques. Let her obtain those that are made for scales; they come almost any size, and though rather clumsy and heavy, answer well for painting on. They can be obtained at scale stores.

C. A. J., Philadelphia.

### JAPANESE STORIES.

Editor of The Art Amateur:

SIR: I have an old carved Japanese ivory representing a frog with an umbrella under a tree. Most of such things have a story. Is there any peculiar significance to this? I have another ivory carved with an illustration of five blind travellers? What is the story about this, if there be any?

"TOGGLE," Boston.

ANSWER.—The frog with the umbrella probably relates to the story of a boy who, noticing a frog trying to leap on to the branches of a willow tree, which it succeeded in doing after repeated failures, was so impressed with the belief that perseverance leads to success that he ever after practised this quality, and eventually became one of the most learned men in Japan. The other story is as follows: "Five blind travellers find themselves at the ford of a stream; to avoid all getting wet in the crossing, they arrange that two shall wade across with the others